

ABSTRACT

The object of the present invention is to provide a novel method for producing cyclic lactic acid oligomers at a high yield, and to provide a cyclic lactic acid oligomer produced by said method. According to the present invention, there is provided a method for producing a cyclic lactic acid oligomer, which comprises:

(i) a first heating process for dehydration condensation of lactic acids by heating, which comprises dehydration condensation of lactic acids under conditions of a pressure and a temperature which allow by-product water to be removed by distillation while avoiding distillation of lactides; and

(ii) a second heating process for generating a dehydrated condensate of lactic acid, which comprises heating the reaction product from said first heating process to a temperature higher than that of the first heating process, reducing the pressure to 100mmHg or lower under conditions of a pressure and a temperature which allow by-product water to be removed by distillation while avoiding distillation of lactides, and further continuing the reaction by heating under the reduced pressure; as well as a cyclic lactic acid oligomer produced by said production method.